

JBSA LEGACY

WWW.JBSA.MIL

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO

APRIL 8, 2022



SEAN WORRELL

Freedom Flyer #209 retired Lt. Col. Frederick McMurray (right) stands with Maj. Ryan "Popeye" Parrish (left), 560th Flying Training Squadron instructor pilot, after he completed his T-38 freedom flight March 24 at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph.

Vietnam POWs/MIAs honored during 48th Freedom Flyer Reunion

Page 17



Honorary commanders visit JBSA-Lackland mission partners

Page 13



NAMRU SA recognizes one of its own during Women's History Month

Page 7

Fiscal 2023 budget funds military for today, future

By Jim Garamone

DOD NEWS

President Joe Biden's \$773 billion fiscal year 2023 Defense Budget Request funds the department for today's security environment and positions the Department of Defense to maintain its competitive advantage in the years ahead, Deputy Secretary of Defense Kathleen H. Hicks said March 28.

Hicks, along with Navy Adm. Christopher W. Grady, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, unveiled the budget that is built on the tenets of the new National Defense Strategy. That strategy recognizes Russia as a concern but still regards China as America's pacing threat.

The budget is roughly an 8.1 percent increase over fiscal year 2022. "These investments are as vital as ever, as we face a myriad of challenges," Hicks said at a Pentagon press conference.

Hicks said the people of Ukraine "are foremost on our minds" as they confront the Russian invasion of their country.

"Even as we confront Russia's malign activities, the defense strategy describes how the department will act urgently to sustain and strengthen deterrence with the [Peoples Republic of China] as our most consequential strategic competitor and pacing challenge. The PRC has the military, economic and technological potential to challenge the international system and our interests within it."

The strategy does not discount other threats and she specifically cited Iran, North Korea and threats from violent extremists.

The United States fights with a joint force that provides amazing combat effectiveness and lethality.

"With the joint warfighting concept and a new strategic approach to setting requirements, our joint force has set out to achieve expanded maneuvers in all domains, building new capabilities and leveraging technologies to achieve overmatch against any potential adversary," Grady said.

Service members and civilians would receive a 4.6 percent pay raise if Congress approves this budget, Hicks said. This is the largest pay raise in 20 years. The request also calls for at least a \$15 per hour minimum wage for everyone in the federal workforce.

The budget request also asks for \$55.8 billion for military health care and \$9.2 billion for family support — including commissaries, DOD Education Activity

schools, youth programs and morale, welfare and recreation programs.

Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III has spoken at length about "integrated deterrence" being one of the key concepts of the new strategy. Two others are campaigning and building enduring advantages.

Integrated deterrence is essentially bringing to bear all aspects of defense and the larger U.S. government. It also calls for working closely with allies and partners around the world.

The fiscal 2023 budget calls for \$56.5 billion for airpower. The money is focused on F-35 fifth-generation joint strike fighters, F-15EX — a mix of fourth-generation aircraft with fifth-generation avionics, the B-21 Raider stealth bomber, more air mobility aircraft, KC-46 tankers and various unmanned aircraft systems.

The budget stressed integrated defense with \$40.8 billion for construction of nine battle force fleet ships.

A total of \$12.6 billion is dedicated to modernization of Army and Marine Corps combat equipment including armored multi-purpose vehicles, the amphibious combat vehicle and the optionally manned fighting vehicle.

Another part of integrated deterrence is the recapitalization of the nuclear triad. The budget request is for \$34.4 billion. This includes upgrades to weapons systems and the nuclear command, control and communications system.

Hypersonic weapons are scheduled to be fielded under this budget request with \$7.2 billion across the services. This includes a hypersonic missile battery by fiscal 2023, hypersonic missiles aboard Navy ships by fiscal 2025 and hypersonic cruise missiles by fiscal 2027.

Another \$24.7 billion goes to missile defeat and defense initiatives, including \$892 million for the defense of Guam from Chinese missiles.

Cyberspace remains a contested domain and the budget contains \$11.2 billion for cyberspace activities including adding five more Cyber Mission Force Teams and "operationalizing" the department's Zero Trust Architecture.

Space is the ultimate high ground and the budget calls for \$27.6 billion for everything from detecting missile launches to global positioning satellites to "hardening" satellite communications.

Another concept in the strategy is called campaigning.

"Our competitors are increasingly undertaking activities designed to erode

U.S. deterrence and advance their own interests via gray zone activities," Hicks said. "We, in turn, will operate forces, synchronize broader department efforts and gain advantage on our terms by tying together the breadth of U.S. and allied and partner defense activities through campaigning."

Central to campaigning is ensuring that the joint force is ready now, across the full battlespace competitors can present, she said.

"DOD will be able to respond to threats anywhere in the world, but "the department will focus our campaigning efforts in the Indo-Pacific and Europe," Hicks said.

In Europe, the budget will support U.S. European Command "and deepen our ironclad commitment to NATO," she said.

Building enduring advantages aspect of the National Defense Strategy comes down to people, Grady said. DOD must grow its talent. It must build resilience and force readiness and it must ensure accountable leadership. The 4.6 percent pay raise for both military and civilian members of DOD. It is the largest civilian pay raise in more than a decade.

"Building enduring advantages also means that the department must continue to innovate and modernize," Hicks said. "Of the roughly \$130 billion that we are investing in [research, development, test and evaluation] — our largest request ever — \$16.5 billion is dedicated to science and technology."

The strategic concept looks to address diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility. The budget includes \$479 million to implement the recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military.

The budget also calls on Congress to allow the services to retire or discontinue programs no longer needed. In the Navy, this calls for the retirement of some cruisers, littoral combat ships and a landing ship dock. In the Air Force, this calls for retiring A-10s, E-3 Sentry aircraft, E-8 JSTARS, KC-135s and C-130H.

The end strength of the services remains essentially unchanged at 2,122,900 active, Guard and Reserve service members.

By percentage, the Air Force department receives 30.3 percent of the budget with the Navy receiving 29.9 percent. The Army receives 22.9 percent and defense-wide is pegged at 16.9 percent.

JBSA LEGACY

Joint Base San Antonio Editorial Staff

502nd Air Base Wing and JBSA Commander

BRIG. GEN.

CAROLINE M. MILLER

502nd ABW/JBSA Public Affairs Director

LT. COL. GINA "FLASH" MCKEEN

Editor

STEVE ELLIOTT

Staff

LORI BULTMAN

DAVID DEKUNDER

JASON WILKINSON

SENIOR AIRMAN

TYLER MCQUISTON

JBSA LEGACY

ADVERTISEMENT OFFICE

EN COMMUNITIES

P.O. BOX 2171

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78297

210-250-2052

This Department of Defense newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the DoD. Contents of the JBSA Legacy are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the DoD, or the U.S. Air Force.

Published by EN Communities a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Air Force under exclusive written contract with the 502d Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the 502d Air Base Wing Public Affairs Office.

Everything advertised in this publication will be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any non-merit factor of the purchaser, user, or patron.

Feedback Fridays

Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller

502D AIR BASE WING AND JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO COMMANDER

Feedback Fridays is a weekly forum that aims to connect the 502d Air Base Wing with members of the Joint Base San Antonio community. Questions are collected during commander's calls, town hall meetings and throughout the week.

If you have a question or concern, please send an email to 502ABW.PA.official@us.af.mil using the subject line "Feedback Fridays."

Questions will be further researched and published as information becomes available.

Q: I have noticed in a few areas around JBASA-Lackland where sections of street lights have been out. It can be a hazard during the nighttime.

Is this due to construction or is it something that can be investigated for repair?

The areas I have noticed lights

out are on Kenly Avenue from Larson Street to Luke Boulevard; just inside Luke East Gate to Kenly Avenue (which, when leaving the installation in the dark, makes it incredibly difficult to see the orange cones that change one outbound lane to inbound); and Truemper Street between Kenly Avenue and Kelly Drive. Thank you.

A: Thank you for taking the time to write a Feedback Friday for your concern.

Our 502nd Civil Engineering Group has investigated the lighting and visibility concerns provided.

We concur that the areas are dark presenting a safety hazard and have requested City Public Service to repair the street lights to an operable condition in the areas identified.



COURTESY GRAPHIC

Air Force Assistance Fund: Airmen taking care of our own



COURTESY GRAPHIC

502nd Air Base Wing Public Affairs

The annual Air Force Assistance Fund, or AF AF, campaign kicked off recently, providing an opportunity to help fellow Airmen and Guardians when they need it most.

The AF AF campaign supports four charities that are dedicated to caring for Airmen from induction through retirement and beyond.

The four charities are the Air Force Aid Society, the Gen. and Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation, the Air Force Villages Charitable Foundation, and the Air Force Enlisted Village. These aren't charities that were part of the Combined Federal Campaign.

The Air Force Aid Society is well-known to many Airmen for their emergency assistance, educational support and

community programs to Air Force families, and as usual, AFAS has stepped in to assist many Air Force families who are facing financial challenges because of COVID-19 causing spouse unemployment and stop-movement orders.

The Gen. & Mrs. Curtis E. LeMay Foundation has provided a "One Time Relief Grant" to each of their widows. The chief operating officer said that they realize our retirees will need additional funds to offset the costs of home deliveries of groceries and medical prescription needs.

The Air Force Enlisted Village provides senior living services for Air Force surviving spouses. AFEV is doing everything possible to protect its residents from the coronavirus including increasing staff to ensure residents' safety.

The Air Force Villages

Charitable Foundation, or AFVCF, is home to widowed spouses who can no longer support themselves, through no fault of their own. AFVCF is also providing extra protection for this vulnerable population through their entire continuum of healthcare.

They are an example of Air and Space Force people taking care of their own — Airmen helping Airmen. The annual campaign demonstrates that "Airmen Take Care of Our Own!"

The allotted time period for the campaign is March 7 through May 13, 2022.

For more information, visit <https://www.afassistancefund.org/>. Go to <https://www.afassistancefund.org/index.php/donate> to use the new e-Giving platform to give via credit card, debit card, or e-Check.

Female Soldiers encouraged by growing opportunities

By Joe Lacdan
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Latosha Ravenell remembers being the only female standing in formations comprised entirely of men. She did not see as many opportunities for women when she enlisted in the Army in 1994.

"I got so accustomed to being the only female," said Ravenell, now the command sergeant major of the Army Marketing and Engagement Brigade at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

Ravenell spoke about the progress of female Soldiers with a group of female leaders and pioneers March 24 including Lt. Gen. Donna Martin, the Army's first Black American female inspector general.

The Charleston, South Carolina, native said that early in her career, some of her mentors told her to conform instead of actively pursuing her career goals. She said she spent months listening to others before she changed her attitude, eventually becoming an accomplished recruiter and later a first sergeant.

"So for me to see this panel, it's powerful," she said. "But I don't think we have seen anything yet. We still have room for improvement."

In the last decade, the Army has seen opportunities for women become more prevalent. To date, the Army has graduated 100 females from its famed Ranger School at Fort Benning, Georgia, after first opening the training to women in 2015.

Martin said that female Soldiers continue to shatter stereotypes by taking leadership roles. In addition to Martin's milestones as a Black female officer, Capt. Catherine Grizzle, another panelist, became the second woman to serve as a battery commander of A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Grizzle achieved another milestone after getting selected as one of the first women to serve as a gunnery instructor at the Army's Field Artillery School in Lawton. Grizzle, a Filipino American in her eighth year in the Army, has deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq and also to Kuwait.

"In regards to stereotypes, these attitudes and beliefs ... really threaten the integrity of the armed forces," Grizzle said. "One oversimplified idea is that women lead with their emotions;



SPC. MATTHAEUS FABIAN
Capt. Catherine Grizzle (right), Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 2nd Field Artillery commander, talks with cannon crew members June 24, 2021, at a firing point on Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

that women are too compassionate to lead service members in combat. This stereotype presents a fundamental barrier to women who may want to join any male-dominated field."

Grizzle said stereotypes coerce women into believing that they have limits in their career progression as leaders. She added that no single leadership style has dominion over other leadership styles and that the Army has mentors that steer female Soldiers to success regardless of their gender.

As a young lieutenant stationed in Germany in the late 1980s, Martin had an encounter with a Soldier that could have broken her early in her military career.

Martin anticipated taking more leadership responsibilities as the company's executive officer when a male Soldier's words shook her. Martin had just welcomed the new lieutenant to the unit and explained to him his duties.

Then the male Soldier abruptly turned to her.

"You're kidding if you think I'm ever going to listen to a woman in uniform," Martin recalled the Soldier saying. The male also made a

comment about her race.

"So not only did he tell me that he wasn't going to do what I told him to do, he flat out refused," Martin said. "So that's the kind of adversity you could face in the military, and I don't know that it is as pervasive as it is back then."

Fortunately, Martin had a company commander who did not condone such behavior. Instead of letting the Soldier's words shatter her confidence, Martin used them as motivation.

"If I had listened to that as a young lieutenant that someone wasn't going to listen to me because of my sex and my race, I would have gotten out of the Army," she said. "But I had leaders that pulled me up. You can either let it define you, or you can prove it wrong."

Martin applauded the Army's current diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, which include the People Strategy and Project Inclusion, a five-year effort where Army leaders promote greater opportunities for Soldiers of all races and backgrounds.

More than three decades later, Martin led a restructuring of the Army Criminal Investigation Command and rose to become the first Black woman commandant of the Army's Military

Police School at Fort Leonard Wood.

First Lt. Rebekah Fox recalled the comments she heard while taking the Army Physical Fitness Test a few years ago.

Male Soldiers quipped that she would pass her test because she "was on the female standard." Her male peers also asked her if she would run with the slowest group.

The panelists agreed that female Soldiers still face adversity in the military, but that such behavior has become less prevalent as female Soldiers shatter stereotypes such as ones that question their ability to engage in strenuous physical activity.

"Being able to surpass those tropes and those stereotypes ... and kind of shattering that surprises people," said Fox, an executive officer at Headquarters Support Company 404th Aviation Support Battalion, 4th Combat Aviation Brigade, Fort Carson, Colorado. "And it's kind of fun to surprise people."

Fox, who originally enlisted as a linguist in the Pennsylvania National Guard, recently earned her Expert Soldier Badge and received the 2021 4th Infantry Division Junior Officer of the Year award.

An enlisted Soldier became the first woman to graduate from the Army's Sniper School in November and 1st Lt. Amber English, a member of the service's World Class Athlete Program, earned a gold medal at the Summer Olympics in women's skeet shooting.

Finally, the panelists addressed the recently modified standards of the Army's Combat Fitness Test, which has shifted to having reduced standards for females and older Soldiers. Originally the Army had planned to use the same fitness standards for all Soldiers regardless of gender or age.

The Army based the change on age and gender performance scales through analysis by the RAND Corporation, performance data and Soldier feedback, Martin said.

"The adjustment in the scoring scale more accurately reflects a distribution of performance across all elements of the Army," she said. "And it ensures a fair transition to a new fitness test of record."

Martin said the standards remain rigorous and will allow the Army to strengthen its culture of physical fitness and improve overall unit readiness.

Application window opens for Career Intermission Program

DOD News

The first CY22 Career Intermission Program application window opened April 1 for eligible Airmen and Guardians interested in a one to three-year temporary break from active duty to meet personal or professional needs outside the service.

The time commitment members must serve upon return to active duty is now a “one month for one month” ratio, instead of the previously required “two months for every one month” of program participation due to a recent change in the FY22 National Defense Authorization Act.

CIP was established in 2014 to allow members to temporarily transfer to the Individual Ready Reserve and then make a seamless transition back to active duty status.

The program allows participants to retain full medical and dental benefits for themselves and eligible dependents, as well as exchange and commissary benefits. Participants also receive a monthly stipend of one-fifteenth of their basic pay.

Additionally, members are authorized travel and transportation allowances to one home of selection within the U.S., and from their home of selection to their follow-on assignment upon return to active duty.

“This is another example of how our department is working to retain talented individuals,” said John A. Fedrigo, Acting Assistant Secretary of the Air Force for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. “We’ve found that

these individuals return to active duty with an enhanced experience, relevant education and a renewed purpose to serve.”

CIP is open to regular Air Force, “career status” active Guard and Reserve Airmen, and Space Force Guardians during application windows. Additionally, dual military Airmen or Guardians who receive unsupported join spouse

assignments, as well as Airmen or Guardians with humanitarian circumstances, can apply for out-of-cycle CIP consideration.

The 1:1 payback change is applicable to those Airmen or Guardians who enter the CIP program on or after Dec. 27, 2021.

There may be specific situations in which one-year participation in CIP will still require a two-year commitment upon a member’s return, such as a PCS-based Active Duty Service Commitment or ADSCs totaling

less than 12 months.

For case-specific questions on how this change applies to them, interested members should discuss it with their leadership and career field teams.

For more information on specific eligibility, contact the Air Force Personnel Center Career Intermission Program office by emailing AFPC.DP2LT.CareerIntermission@us.af.mil.

Applications for the first application window in CY22 will be accepted from April 1 to May 13, 2022. Eligibility criteria, application cycles, and application procedures information may be found at mypers.af.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/27945/kw/CIP/p/9.

“This is another example of how our department is working to retain talented individuals. We’ve found that these individuals return to active duty with an enhanced experience, relevant education and a renewed purpose to serve.”

**John A. Fedrigo,
Acting Assistant Secretary
of the Air Force
for Manpower and Reserve Affairs**

FORT SAM HOUSTON

Joint Base San Antonio honors Vietnam Veterans at March 29 ceremony

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Joint Base San Antonio leaders honored the service and sacrifice of Vietnam War veterans and their families during a National Vietnam War Veterans Day ceremony at the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Exchange March 29.

The ceremony was hosted by the Army & Air Force Exchange Service and included remarks by 502nd Air Base Wing and JBSA commander Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller and Antonio Porter, the mid-central region vice president for the Exchange.

Each of the 67 veterans at the ceremony was presented with a commemorative Vietnam Veteran lapel pin, which was provided in partnership with the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration and the Exchange.

Gene Marin, who served in Vietnam in 1971, said he was thankful for the appreciation shown to him and his fellow Vietnam veterans at the ceremony.

"Anytime someone wants to thank us, it's appreciated because we know what happened many, many years ago when we came back. We were basically given the guilt trip and shamed," Marin said. "I think they did a good job with the ceremony and we appreciate it."

Miller told the veterans she was inspired to go into the service because of her father and uncle, who both served in Vietnam.

Unfortunately, Miller said, her uncle had a tough time after coming home from Vietnam because he had post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD, and until his death, never spoke about what he saw or experienced while serving in Vietnam.

"He served his country and I honor him today," Miller said.

Miller spoke about the significance of observing National Vietnam War Veterans Day March 29. It was on that day in 1973 the U.S. pulled all of its combat troops out of Vietnam and 591 U.S. prisoners of war returned home.



THOMAS A. CONEY

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller, commander, 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio, provides opening remarks during the Vietnam War Veterans Commemorative ceremony at the Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston Exchange March 29.

Miller said the ceremony was also to recognize those service members who have lost their lives serving their country. Of the 2.7 million service members who fought in Vietnam, 58,000 were killed, with 308,000 either wounded or killed.

"We take this day to pause and say thank you," Miller said. "Thank you for leading the way. Thank you for allowing your service so now we too can serve this generation and beyond."

Porter said the Exchange provided the commemorative lapel pins as a token of thanks to the Vietnam veterans for their service, valor and sacrifice.

"Many of our Vietnam veterans did not receive the gratitude and recognition they deserved," Porter said. "The American public did not understand their service and sacrifice. Today, we pay

proper respect to these heroes."

Al Johnson, who served as an Air Force radar and board operator in Vietnam from 1970-72, said the remarks given by Miller and Porter were well-spoken.

"It's nice to be recognized properly," Johnson said. "We don't need to be heroes. Thank you for your service is plenty and good enough as opposed to what we got when we came back."

At end of the ceremony, Miller, JBSA Command Chief Master Sgt. Casey Boomershine, and Col. Shane Cuellar, 502nd Force Support Group commander, took turns pinning the lapel pins on the veterans who lined up to receive them.

The commemorative pin each of the veterans received have the words "Vietnam War Veteran" engraved in a

circle, with laurel wreaths, around an image of an eagle. Behind the eagle are the red and white stripes of the American flag with six stars representing the number of countries, including the U.S., who fought alongside the South Vietnamese.

On the back of the pin, engraved is the message "A Grateful Nation Thanks and Honors You."

The JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Exchange was among 150 Exchanges worldwide that hosted ceremonies honoring all veterans who served from Nov. 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975, regardless of location. The Exchange has partnered with the United States of America Vietnam War Commemoration in 500 plus commemorative events honoring more than 60,000 Vietnam veterans.

NAMRU SA recognizes one of its own during Women's History Month

By Burrell Parmer

NAVAL MEDICAL RESEARCH UNIT SAN ANTONIO
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Approximately 50 percent of Naval Medical Research Unit San Antonio's military, civilian and contract personnel is comprised of women, so it's fitting that the 2022 theme of Women's History Month is "Providing Healing. Promoting Hope."

One of the highly professional women within Navy Medicine is Cmdr. Leslie Trippe, department head of the environmental surveillance and epidemiology departments of NAMRU San Antonio's Craniofacial Health and Restorative Medicine Directorate.

Born in Lafayette, Louisiana, and raised in Houston, Trippe has been serving America's Navy for 13 years, first serving aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75).

A graduate of the Baylor College of Dentistry, Trippe was recruited for the Navy as a dental hygienist.

"Honestly, I was trying to obtain scholarship funds to offset the cost of dental school," said Trippe, who obtained her master's from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. "I figured that the Navy may be a good career for me and that I could be stationed near the ocean."

Trippe, who has been a dentist for 22 years, says that the best part of being in the Navy is working with people and accomplishing the mission.

"I am a dentist serving in a research command, which is out of my comfort zone of patient care, but strongly feel that I am able to contribute to the command's mission," Trippe said. "Our mission can only be accomplished with having a very competent and dedicated workforce."

As the department head for environmental surveillance, Trippe is responsible for overseeing the development and testing of systems and technologies that minimize the environmental impact and occupational hazards of Navy dentistry while the epidemiology department conducts research that investigates factors that impact the readiness of Sailors and Marines while deployed and in garrison.



BURRELL PARMER

In addition to her department head duties, Trippe serves as the program manager for NAMRU San Antonio's Medical Inspector General Program as well as the Command Managed Equal Opportunity Program.

According to Trippe, Women's History Month is a wonderful time of year when young girls and women have an opportunity to learn about all the amazing success stories of women within the armed forces.

"Women in the military have had various experiences, and sharing those experiences shows our youngsters that pretty much anything is attainable," Trippe said. "My service in the Navy has provided me with security and many benefits that come along with a wonderful career."

In addition to being an example to others within NAMRU San Antonio, Trippe utilizes some of her off-duty time

to volunteer for Lasagna Love, a global nonprofit and grassroots movement that aims to positively impact communities by connecting neighbors with neighbors through homemade meal delivery. She also volunteers in support of her daughter's high school marching band.

NAMRU San Antonio's mission is to conduct gap-driven combat casualty care, craniofacial, and directed energy research to improve survival, operational readiness, and safety of Department of Defense personnel engaged in routine and expeditionary operations.

It is one of the leading research and development laboratories for the U.S. Navy under the Department of Defense and is one of eight subordinate research commands in the global network of laboratories operating under the Naval Medical Research Center in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Naval Medical Research Unit San Antonio spotlights Cmdr. Leslie Trippe, department head of the Environmental Surveillance and Epidemiology Departments of NAMRU San Antonio's Craniofacial Health and Restorative Medicine Directorate during Women's History Month. Trippe has been serving in the Navy for 13 years, first serving aboard the USS Harry S. Truman (CVN 75).

"Women in the military have had various experiences, and sharing those experiences shows our youngsters that pretty much anything is attainable. My service in the Navy has provided me with security and many benefits that come along with a wonderful career."

**Cmdr. Leslie Trippe,
NAMRU San Antonio's Craniofacial
Health and Restorative Medicine
Directorate department head**



SPC. KHALAN MOORE

U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Kirk Pierce (center right), Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region-1st Air Force (Air Forces Northern) commander, joins a military medical team while celebrating their last shift supporting COVID-19 response operations at State University New York Upstate Medical University Hospital, Syracuse, New York, March 12.

Military completes latest COVID-19 medical response mission

U.S. Army North (Fifth Army) Public Affairs

The last of the 68 military COVID-19 medical response teams that deployed beginning August 2021, completed their mission March 29 at the University of Utah Hospital in Salt Lake City, Utah.

The 68 teams, comprised of approximately 1,275 military personnel, supported 62 hospitals in 59 cities across 30 states and the Navajo Nation.

“Through two of our task forces — Joint Task Force Civil Support and the U.S. Army North Contingency Command Post (Task Force 51) — and our Defense Coordinating Officers and Defense Coordinating Elements, we have provided military medical support to FEMA across 30 states and the Navajo Nation since last summer,” said Lt. Gen. John R. Evans Jr., U.S. Army North commander. “While we adjust our support to the lead federal agency and the whole-of-government

response to the pandemic, we remain poised to respond to this or any manmade or natural disaster as we continue to defend the homeland.”

At the request of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Department of Defense through U.S. Northern Command and its Joint Force Land Component Command, U.S. Army North, deployed 68 teams from the Army, Air Force, and Navy, between August 2021 and March 2022.

Since March 2020, approximately 5,800 military medical providers from the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, and U.S. Navy have worked alongside civilian healthcare providers in non-DoD hospitals across the country.

Their support is in addition to the approximately 5,000 service members from the U.S. Army, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps, and U.S. Navy who administered vaccinations at state-run, federally supported vaccination centers in the fight against COVID-19.

Annual JBSA Volunteer Awards Ceremony honors those who give back

By David DeKunder

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The contributions of individuals who have given their time to the betterment of the Joint Base San Antonio community will be recognized when JBSA hosts its annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony April 20.

The ceremony will be held from 1-3 p.m. at the JBSA-Fort Sam Houston Military & Family Readiness Center, 3060 Stanley Road, building 2797, and will be live-streamed on the JBSA Facebook page.

Because of COVID-19 protocols, in-person attendance will be limited to award recipients, the persons who nominated them for an award, and the supervisors of the units and organizations they volunteer for.

Forty-one individuals throughout JBSA have been nominated for an award by the supervisor of the unit or organization they volunteer for or by an individual, said George Romero, JBSA-Fort Sam Houston M&FRC installation volunteer coordinator.

Volunteer of the Year Awards will be presented to individuals in eight categories who contributed their time and service to JBSA units and local community volunteer organizations in 2021, representing all branches of service, and who made a significant positive impact on the lives of others.

The Volunteer Excellence Award will also be



COURTESY GRAPHIC

presented to a JBSA community member or members in recognition of long-term volunteerism over a number of years.

Romero said the ceremony will follow the theme of Army Volunteer Appreciation Week, which will be observed April 17-23, of “We Salute You: Shining a light on the people and causes that inspire us to serve.”

“The meaning behind this week of appreciation is that it affords the opportunity to recognize the impact of volunteer service both on and off the installation,” Romero said.

Even during the challenging times of the pandemic, Romero said many JBSA members have still put in many hours volunteering their time to a unit or local community volunteer organization.

“I think its important volunteers are being recognized because of the efforts and dedication they are giving to that office,” Romero said. “People have put in hundreds of hours and that is so important. Some people have made it their own little mission to volunteer for that organization and do the best they can to make that organization grow.”

Attending and giving remarks will be 502nd Air Base Wing and JBSA commander Brig. Gen. Caroline M. Miller; Lt. Gen. John Evans Jr., Army North (Fifth Army) commanding general; and Rear Adm. Cynthia Kuehner, Naval Medical Forces Support Command commander.

During the ceremony, Col. Shane Cuellar, 502nd Force Support Group commander, and Lt. Col Marjorie Barnum, 802nd Force Support Squadron commander, will present an oversized check to illustrate the equivalent value of volunteer hours performed in 2021. Romero said the “Big Check” presentation puts into perspective the contribution volunteers make to the JBSA community.

JBSA members who are interested in volunteering can contact any of the M&FRCs at JBSA-Fort Sam Houston, 210-221-2705; JBSA-Lackland, 210-671-3722, or JBSA-Randolph, 210-652-5321.

MICC one-on-one small business engagements set for May

By Daniel P. Elkins

MISSION AND INSTALLATION CONTRACTING
COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Small business professionals from across the Mission and Installation Contracting Command are teaming with the Virginia Procurement Technical Assistance Center to conduct one-on-one meetings with small businesses during a matchmaking event May 23 and 24.

Registration is open at the 2022 PTAC Conference and Matchmaker website at virginiaptac.ccenterdirect.com/events/3325.

Approximately 20 MICC contracting officers and contract specialists, as well as representatives from supported mission partners, are taking part in the hybrid event consisting of both in-person and virtual meetings as a follow-on to the MICC Advanced Planning Briefings to Industry taking place this week as an overview of

forecasted contract needs by the Army.

“Small businesses will be able to utilize the forecast and requirements briefed at the APBI to determine which contracting officer or customer to meet with during the matchmaking event,” said Amy Ulisse, an assistant director for the office of small business programs at the MICC Field Directorate Office at Fort Eustis, Virginia. “Contracting officers are able to potentially engage small business contractors that could support acquisitions they were currently working, which can positively impact market research in developing a successful market research strategy.”

Ulisse, who led planning for the APBI, likened the style of the matchmaking event to speed dating, allowing small business representatives from around the world to share their capability briefings and how they can support the MICC and Army missions. She said it was

“Small businesses will be able to utilize the forecast and requirements briefed at the APBI to determine which contracting officer or customer to meet with during the matchmaking event.”

Amy Ulisse, MICC Field Directorate
Office assistant director

through her relationship with Virginia PTAC operations manager Elizabeth Torrens and the success of last year's matchmaking event that the MICC is able to serve as a core government host this year.

“Because this is a hybrid event, with the first day taking place in-person

with a virtual option, we expect to have over 300 registrants signed up and are planning for about half of those registrants to join us at the George Mason University-Arlington campus,” Torrens said. “This is our first event not attached to a specific agency where we are bringing together the efforts of the three local PTACs including Washington, D.C., Maryland and Virginia, and we look forward to bringing together a good mix of attendees representing both agencies, large primes and small business contractors.”

The combined effort by the PTACs follows a June 2021 announcement by the presidential administration to grow federal contracting with small disadvantaged businesses by 50 percent over five years. Torrens expects that increase to prompt involvement by small business that may not have previously participated in the government contracting process.

MEDCoE conducts listening session focused on Army's transgender policy

By Tish Williamson

U.S. ARMY MEDICAL CENTER OF EXCELLENCE
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS

In advance of International Transgender Day of Visibility March 31, the U.S. Army Medical Center of Excellence dedicated this month's "Voice to the Command" listening session to a discussion on the U.S. Army's transgender policy.

The MEDCoE Command Team of Maj. Gen. Dennis LeMaster, Command Sgt. Maj. Clark Charpentier and J.M. Harmon III, hosted the event that was attended by more than 150 people virtually via Teams and in-person in Blesse Auditorium, Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston, March 24.

MEDCoE established the Voice to the Command as a recurring listening session on a wide variety of topics centered on diversity, inclusion and

living the Army Values in June 2020 after the death of George Floyd while in police custody sparked international outrage and opened conversations about systemic racism.

The March Voice to the Command was an opportunity to highlight the nuanced implications of enforcing Army Directive 2021-22, "Army Service by Transgender Persons and Persons with Gender Dysphoria," published June 22, 2021, while allowing participants to express feelings or personal experiences on the topic.

Lt. Col. Lamisa Shaw, MEDCoE G1 and the MEDCoE proponent for the Army's People First Strategy, moderated the event and set the ground rules for attendees.

"This is a safe space, so you should feel free to voice your opinion as long as we continue to treat each other with dignity and respect," Shaw said,

"This is a safe space, so you should feel free to voice your opinion as long as we continue to treat each other with dignity and respect."

Lt. Col. Lamisa Shaw, MEDCoE G1 and the MEDCoE proponent for the Army's People First Strategy

"especially when or if your opinion conflicts with the Army's current policy of inclusion."

Capt. Chad Beach, the MEDCoE Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Center officer in charge and lead MEDCoE

trainer on the Army's Transgender Policy, led the question-and-answer portion of the session.

Beach also reviewed vignettes he wanted to highlight from the training that he has seen from training over 100 MEDCoE leaders and supervisors on the policy.

Attendees also got the opportunity to hear from Maj. Alivia Stehlik, an Army physical therapist and transgender woman, who shared her personal story of transitioning while in the Army while attached to a brigade combat team.

The MEDCoE command team directed that all MEDCoE Soldiers and civilians will receive training and education on the Army's Transgender Policy by April 22, 2022.

To learn more about the Army's Transgender and Inclusion Policies, visit <https://www.army.mil/standto/archive/2021/06/25/>.

U.S., HONDURAN ARMY DELEGATIONS SPEAK DURING CENTRAL AMERICAN WORKING GROUP

Maj. Gen. William L. Thigpen (right), U.S. Army South Commanding General, and Gen. Omar Adalid Videa Espinal (left), Honduran army Inspector General of the Honduran Armed Forces, discuss the current and future relationship between the U.S. and Honduran Armies and signed a non-binding bilateral agreement March 22 outlining the framework for coordinated activities and partnership opportunities. Delegations from the U.S., Guatemalan, El Salvadoran and Honduran armies were in attendance for the working group and discussed the upcoming Central American Working Group Guardian, which is a regional exercise designed to simulate regional threats and practice a combined response.





JOSE SAEZ

U.S. Army and Brazilian Army planners conduct a concept development conference for Exercise Southern Vanguard 2024 at U.S. Army South headquarters at Joint Base San Antonio-Fort Sam Houston March 7.

Army South hosts conference for Exercise Southern Vanguard 2024

By Leanne Thomas

U.S. ARMY SOUTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS

A concept development conference for Exercise Southern Vanguard 2024 took place with Brazilian Army planners at U.S. Army South Headquarters March 7-9, 2022.

Exercise Southern Vanguard is a U.S. Southern Command-sponsored, U.S. Army South-conducted exercise at the operational and tactical levels designed to increase interoperability between U.S. and Western Hemisphere forces.

Exercise Southern Vanguard 2024, which will occur in the Fall of 2023, is aimed at improving combined readiness between U.S. Army and Brazilian Army forces.

"During the concept development conference, we are laying out the framework for the exercise to identify the exact location, duration, and the specific units that will participate in the training," said Manuel Garces, Army South scenario planner G-7 Training and Exercises. "So we end up working together with the ultimate goal of interoperability, and we continue to maintain, and strengthen the relationship between the U.S. and Brazil."

In December 2021, U.S. Army and Brazilian Army forces conducted Southern Vanguard 2022 in Lorena, São

Paulo, Brazil, which was the largest U.S. element to conduct combined training with Brazil since World War II.

Brazilian Army Col. Alessandro Pinho, chief of the Brazilian Army Land Operations Command, said the main difference between the second iteration of Southern Vanguard is the change of environment.

"Southern Vanguard 22 was held in São Paulo, an urban environment, but the next one will be held in a jungle environment in the northern region of Brazil," Pinho said. "It will be more challenging for us and the U.S. Army to manage the exercise there, but it will also be very useful training."

Based on the complexity and scale of this operational exercise, planning takes place years in advance.

"I think both countries, the U.S. and Brazil, have main core values," Pinho said. "This kind of exercise is a good opportunity to improve our interoperability, our partnership, our friendship, and it is very useful for us to operate together in case of regional crisis and to solve regional problems."

Southern Vanguard is a rotating exercise that Army South conducts with partner nations in Central and South America. The next iteration, Exercise Southern Vanguard 2023, will take place in Colombia with U.S. Army and Colombian Army forces.

U.S. ARMY SOUTH COMMANDING GENERAL MEETS GUATEMALAN U.S. COUNTRY TEAM



COURTESY PHOTO

U.S. Army South Commanding General, Maj. Gen. William L. Thigpen (right), met with Anu Rajaraman, acting deputy chief of mission, U.S. Embassy-Guatemala in Guatemala City, March 22 to discuss opportunities and challenges the U.S. military faces in the country. Guatemala is hosting CENTAM GUARDIAN 2023, a Combined Command Post Exercise with military units from El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and the United States focused on increasing interoperability capabilities in a multi-domain environment.

LACKLAND

Honorary commanders visit JBSA-Lackland mission partners

By Olivia Mendoza Sencalar

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Brig. Gen. Caroline Miller, commander, 502nd Air Base Wing and Joint Base San Antonio, hosted seven honorary commanders from across the Joint Base San Antonio metropolitan area for a tour of JBSA-Lackland March 25.

As honorary commanders, the community leaders participate in a variety of special events during their two-year term, allowing them to interact with JBSA service members and learn more about the missions of different units.

"The 502nd ABW Honorary Commander program is unique," Miller said. "During the first year of the program, our civic leaders have an opportunity to learn about our mission. The following year, we have a chance to highlight our mission partners and the great things that they do."

During last year's tours, our civic leaders gained insight into the operations and responsibilities of the 502nd ABW. This year, our civics are learning about our mission partners, starting off with the 433rd Airlift Wing and Special Warfare Training Wing.

At the 433rd AW, the group was welcomed by Col. Terry W. McClain, commander of the Air Force Reserve Command-affiliated wing.

McClain briefed the group about the five different squadrons and their missions, explaining there were two squadrons training Airmen on C-5s; an operational support squadron that supplies logistics; an aeromedical evacuation squadron; and the 68th Airlift Squadron, responsible for worldwide mobility.

"The C-5M Super Galaxy is the biggest airplane in the United States military inventory and the second largest in the world," McClain told the group.

After learning its primary mission of transporting cargo and personnel for the Department of Defense with a cargo hold capable of transporting up to 281,001 pounds, the group headed to the flight line to see the inside of a C-5M.

"This is awesome," said Sylvia Rincon,



BRIAN J. VALENCIA

Joint Base San Antonio honorary commanders get a close look at a C-5M Galaxy at the 433rd Airlift Wing at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland March 25.

Southside Independent School District communications representative business development officer. "We get to act like kids inside a C-5, see the seating area and sit in the cockpit. I'm amazed at how big it is."

"The tour of the 433rd Airlift Wing was fantastic," said honorary commander Melissa Ochoa, president of the San Antonio LGBT Chamber. "I've lived in San Antonio for 30 years and always see the C-5 planes flying around, but there's something different about walking into one and seeing the inside. It is huge and amazing how it can be so big and heavy and still fly."

The tour continued to the JBSA-Chapman Training Annex to visit the Special Warfare Training Wing facility, where several SWTW members greeted the civic leaders at the Memorial

of the Fallen Special Forces Airmen flagpole site.

The group then went to the Special Forces operations training facility where state-of-the-art fitness equipment is provided for service members to conduct physical training and rehabilitation.

The honorary commanders visited six stations, where they were educated on nutrition, body composition, metabolic assessment, strength and conditioning, and the use of the blood flow restriction when using weights.

Air Force paramedic, or PJ, specialists then gave a demonstration on how to use a medical tourniquet. Paramedics are Air Force Special Operations Command and Air Combat Command operators tasked with the recovery and medical treatment of personnel in humanitarian and combat environments.

"The paramedics have a more increased scope of practice in San Antonio than in other states, giving our students the ability to train much closer to our protocols," said Master Sgt. Sean Anderson, superintendent of the Modernized Pararescue Provider Program, or MP3. "The students have 450 hours of clinical time with the San Antonio Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services. The medical MP3 course has three overall phases that the PJs must complete, are the EMT, paramedic and combat medic phase."

"I was fascinated by the Personalized Tourniquet System," Ochoa said. "I learned how to use a tourniquet for bleeding injuries. Overall the tour was very interesting to me and I'm grateful I had the opportunity to attend."

149th Fighter Wing Airman overcomes adversity through powerlifting

By Senior Airman Kaliea Green

149TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

What started as a simple interest in weightlifting for an Airman has transformed into breaking national records as a member of the Air Force National Powerlifting Team.

Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Le, 149th Force Support Squadron member at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, recently competed March 19 in the Military, Police, and FireFighter National Championship in Atlanta, Georgia, after a six-year hiatus.

Le first started powerlifting over 10 years ago after arriving at his first active duty station and became hooked on the sport shortly thereafter. His first supervisor, now retired Senior Master Sgt. Lorenzo Peterson, saw the potential in Le and guided him into the world of powerlifting and ultimately to the Air Force Team.

"He showed me the ropes, helped me with my goals and even signed me up for my first meet," Le said.

Under Peterson's guidance, Le began training and preparing for his first meet in Colorado.

Le went into his local competition with no expectations, in the end, he lifted a combined total of more than quadruple his body weight.

"Technique is stronger than raw strength, the goal is to keep being active and competitive," Peterson said before Le's first meet.

Once he realized the potential his strength held, Le's commitment to the sport solidified. Since then, powerlifting has been a source of solace for Le and has pushed him to excel in both his Air Force and civilian careers.

"Powerlifting is how I stay grounded," Le said. "Lifting is not just about working out. Being in the gym has multiple meanings. I go because powerlifting helps me be alive. It's the reason I stay positive and happy every day."

In addition to staying in excellent shape for competition, Le's other duties demand the same physicality.

In the Air National Guard, Le assists with the 149th Fatality Search and Recovery Team, a job that entails



Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Le, a 149th Force Support Squadron member, recently competed in the Military, Police, and FireFighter National Championship in Atlanta, Georgia on March 19 after a 6-year hiatus.

finding and recovering remains after a chemical disaster. He also serves as a U.S. Customs and Border Protection officer in a civilian capacity. Powerlifting keeps Le feeling equipped and ready to serve the community.

After joining the Air Force's official powerlifting team in 2013, Le placed at all three national powerlifting meets he competed in, and powerlifting became an integral section of his life.

In 2019, Le suffered a back injury that forced him to take time off from lifting to recover. When Le realized that he

wasn't able to continue to lift at his current capacity, he looked to others for motivation.

"What helped me was having a strong support system and having people around to push me," Le said. "I want to come back stronger than ever. When you get down, you've got to come back up and take an extra step forward."

Le reunited with his former members of the Air Force Powerlifting Team when he competed in Atlanta recently.

"The moment when you're on the platform and everyone around you is

"What helped me was having a strong support system and having people around to push me. I want to come back stronger than ever. When you get down, you've got to come back up and take an extra step forward."

Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Le,
149th Force Support Squadron



Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Le, 149th Force Support Squadron, works with the 149th Fatality Search and Recovery Team, a job that entails finding and recovering remains after a chemical disaster.

supporting you no matter what, that's the feeling that I've been missing," Le said.

For the championship, Le competed at a weight of 148 pounds with a goal of squatting 452 pounds, benching 303 pounds, and deadlifting 501 pounds.

"It'll be tough, but I believe I can do it," he said.

Le is more concerned with the whole powerlifting experience than a particular outcome.

"Just know, win or lose at least you did it and learned from your mistakes. There's no losing — it's actually learning," Le said.

Application window opens for Olympic hopefuls

By Armando Perez

AIR FORCE INSTALLATION AND MISSION
SUPPORT CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The application window for Airmen, Guardians, Reservists and Guardsmen who dream of Olympic competition is now open. Athletes can begin applying to begin their training with the hopes of competing in the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, France.

Following on the heels of 2022 Winter Olympian Airman 1st Class Kelly Curtis, Department of the Air Force and Space Force athletes have 45 days to apply to begin their training with the hopes of competing in the 2024 Summer Olympics in Paris, France.

Once accepted into the program, athletes train full-time for the chance to represent the DAF and the nation on the world stage.

Capt. Cale Simmons, a WCAP pole-vaulter, competed in the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and credits WCAP with his making the team.

"Training with the WCAP program is hands-down by far the best training I've had," said Simmons, who trained



U.S. AIR FORCE GRAPHIC

at the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colorado. "We have nutritionists, strength and conditioning coaches, everyone works together on a coordinated front. If I were to do this on my own with no coach, it would be very difficult. To be part of WCAP is a great honor."

Throughout the program's 28-year history, 12 Air Force WCAP members have made the Olympic team with the most recent being Curtis, the first female to make the Winter Olympic

team through WCAP in 24 years.

"This experience has been too good to be true, the support you receive from the Air Force Services Center and WCAP has allowed me to progress in my sport in such a short amount of time," Curtis said. "Being able to compete in the Olympics would not have been possible without the support of WCAP and my family."

Established in 1995, Air Force WCAP, managed by AFSVC, continues the legacy of Tuskegee Airman Malvin G. Whitfield. Whitfield, a Korean War tail gunner, became the first active duty American service member to win Olympic gold in 1952 in Helsinki.

"Within the Air Force and Space Force, there are elite athletes who require dedicated and quality training regiments to improve their chances of making the Olympic team," said Dale Filsell, DAF WCAP program manager. "Applying and if accepted into the WCAP allows them the opportunity to dedicate the next two years to achieve their goal of making the Olympics."

Unlike "Marvelous Mal" Whitfield, who trained for the '52 Games by running on an airfield between bombing missions, WCAP athletes

train full time. Athletes compete in national and international events for the purposes of qualifying the Olympic team.

Although WCAP athletes train full-time in their given sport, they are also required to complete all annual and ancillary training, professional military education, fitness assessments and other mandatory tasks required of all Airmen.

"Active duty Airmen and Guardians are eligible for WCAP. Applications will need to route through the athlete's career field manager, commander, and senior rater for release from the career field and endorsement to apply," said Maj. Aaron Tissot, AFSVC fitness and sports chief. "Additionally, athletes will need an endorsement from their sport's national governing body, which verifies the potential to make Team USA."

The application period for the 2024 Summer Olympic season for the DAF WCAP begins this month. Interested Airmen, Guardians, Reservists and Guardsmen can apply or find out more information on the program by visiting www.myairstorcelife.com/sports-world-class-athletes/ or e-mail AFSVC WCAP.Workflow@us.af.mil.

59TH MEDICAL WING: PULMONARY TRAINS FOR CPET



John Sessums, 59th Medical Specialty Squadron respiratory care practitioner, attaches an adapter to analyze a patient's lung function during a Cardiopulmonary Exercise Test, or CPET, at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Feb. 24. The CPET is a clinical tool that evaluates exercise capacity and determines cardiac or lung condition.

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS MELODY BORDEAUX



Airman 1st Class Shanterria Dewberry, 59th Radiology Squadron radiology technician, screens a patient for COVID-19 at Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, August 18, 2021.

AIRMAN 1ST CLASS MELODY BORDEAUX

59th Medical Wing closes drive-thru COVID-19 testing site; other options available

By 59th Medical Wing Public Affairs

The 59th Medical Wing closed the Wilford Hall Ambulatory Surgical Center drive-thru COVID-19 screening and testing site April 1.

As of Monday, April 4, TRICARE eligible beneficiaries can pick up at-home COVID-19 rapid diagnostic test kits. Beneficiaries must present their ID card and can receive up to eight test kits per month. Pick-up locations and times are:

Pick-Up Locations

- ▶ WHASC Atrium (Information Desk located through Entry Door B)
- ▶ Randolph Clinic (Main Entrance Information Desk)

Pick-Up Times

- ▶ Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and

Friday from 8-10 a.m.

For patients in need of a pre-op or pre-procedural test, individual clinics will provide test details prior to surgery. Service members deploying who in need of a test will be provided instructions from their deployment managers.

As an additional option for testing, patients can obtain a test at a community-based site; for locations visit <https://covid19.sanantonio.gov/What-You-Can-Do/Testing>.

Thank you to all our teammates who contributed to this tremendous screening/testing effort. Our sites ensured our beneficiaries and staff were tested in a safe environment, while also easing the burden on our emergency departments and community sites.

U.S. SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND KOREA SENIOR ENLISTED LEADER VISITS SPECIAL WARFARE TRAINING WING



BRIAN BOISVERT

U.S. Army Command Sgt. Maj. JoAnn Naumann (right), command senior enlisted leader, U.S. Special Operations Command Korea speaks with U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Michael Perolio (left), Special Warfare Training Flight Superintendent, about the Assessment and Selection process for Air Force Special Warfare candidates at Joint Base San Antonio Mar. 16. Naumann visited the area to mentor the NCOs and observe the SWTW Assessment and Selection process.

RANDOLPH

Vietnam POWs/MIAs honored during 48th Freedom Flyer Reunion

By Steve Elliott

502ND AIR BASE WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Two former Vietnam veterans and prisoners of war were honored by the 560th Flying Training Squadron during the 48th Annual Freedom Flyer Reunion at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph March 24-25.

In March 1973, all American troops left the Vietnam conflict as per the Paris Peace Accords, and in that same month, the "Chargin' Cheetahs" were selected to retrain repatriated U.S. prisoners of war, shot down in combat, to resume their flying service.

The 560th FTS has hosted the reunion every year since then — with the exception of 2020 — bringing together a group of Airmen united by a shared experience of survival against all odds and celebrating the triumph of the human spirit. The activities honor the sacrifices of the POWs and their families, providing a unique opportunity for others to learn about their experiences.

The Freedom Flyers — Air Force aviators who endured years of physical and mental torture in infamous prisoner-of-war camps like the "Hanoi Hilton" — took part in a wreath-laying ceremony, an aerial review and a Prisoner of War/Missing in Action Symposium.

During the two-day reunion, Freedom Flyer #208, retired Maj. Theodore Sienicki, and Freedom Flyer #209, retired Lt. Col. Frederick McMurray, participated in aerospace physiology training, egress training, a freedom flyer brief and a final flight. Sienicki and McMurray were also greeted upon landing with the traditional champagne shower to commemorate their "fini flights."

During the Vietnam War, it was tradition for the pilot's last flight in Southeast Asia to be their "champagne" flight, where they would be met by their peers and celebrated for their safe

return. For POWs, this flight was never accomplished.

"These brave Americans sitting before us embody the courage, character and commitment that shape who we are as Airmen," said Col. Scott Rowe, 12th Flying Training Wing commander, during the wreath-laying ceremony and aerial review at the Missing Man Monument at Washington Circle at JBSA-Randolph March 25. "Thank you for your service and your sacrifice to our country."

"We gather for the express purpose of recognizing, honoring and celebrating the U.S. Air Force pilots, weapons systems officers, electronic warfare officers and navigators who were downed over Vietnam," said guest speaker Brig. Gen. Scheid Hodges, Individual Mobilization Assistant to the commander for 8th Air Force and Joint Global Strike Operations Center at Barksdale Air Force Base, Louisiana. "They returned with honor and many later flew right here at Randolph Air Force Base to be requalified for active service or for their 'fini flight.'"

At the conclusion of the ceremony, a four-ship flyby of T-38C Talons from the 560th TFS performed a missing-man formation. There were also flybys by a T-1 Jayhawk from the 99th FTS; a T-6 Texan II from the 559th FTS; a B-1 Lancer from the 28th Bomber Squadron from Dyess Air Force Base, Texas; an AC-130J Ghost Rider from the 17th Special Operations Squadron at Cannon Air Force Base, New Mexico; and an A-10C Thunderbolt from the 75th Fighter Squadron from Moody Air Force Base, Georgia.

A highlight of the reunion was the POW/MIA symposium March 25 at Fleenor Auditorium, which featured the stories and reflections from POWs who shared their experiences from their time inside the "Hanoi Hilton," the infamous POW camp and other camps.

The grim, but inspiring, stories



MASTER SGT. CHRISTOPHER BOITZ

U.S. Air Force T-38C Talons assigned to the 560th Flying Training Squadron at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph fly in formation during the 48th Annual Freedom Flyer Reunion flight March 24.



SEAN WORRELL

Vietnam War veterans, service members and others attend the 48th Annual Freedom Flyer Wreath Laying Ceremony and Aerial Review at Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph March 25.

included the establishment of the tap code and other successful forms of communication. The forum also gave the Freedom Flyers an opportunity to relay their experiences to today's Airmen, the majority of whom are too young to remember the conflict.

"The most common question we get is 'How did we do it,'" said retired Col. Tom McNish, a former F-105 pilot and one of the POWs who spoke at the symposium. "It comes down to faith — faith in God, faith in country, faith in ourselves and faith in our fellow prisoners — along with integrity and determination."

One theme common amongst the former POWs speaking at the symposium was the ability to communicate with each other.

"Communication was our victory," McNish said. "The Viet Cong could never stop us. We continued to connect and

support each other."

"Our job was to live up to the Code of Conduct," said retired Col. Lee Ellis, in describing the camaraderie amongst POWs. "When you're a leader with character, you gain trust. When you have confidence and humility, people will follow you."

"The things we learned in the military and as POWs still apply today," Sienicki said. "What do you do as an ordinary guy in this situation? You do everything you can. Ingenuity just comes down to ordinary guys doing extraordinary things."

"Freedom is not free," added McNish, who spent 2,373 days in captivity. "If we fail to protect our freedom anywhere, the world becomes less free. It becomes more difficult to defend ourselves when this happens."

Air Force team blitzes Houston to inspire future Airmen for rated careers

By Capt. Victoria Carman

AIR FORCE RECRUITING SERVICE, DET. 1

Air Force Recruiting Service, Detachment 1, hit the streets of Houston Feb. 22-25 to inspire young people in multiple school districts, colleges, clubs and volunteer organizations.

Det. 1's primary mission is to inform, influence and inspire the next generation of rated aviators.

"The initial vision for the Houston Blitz was for our new members to integrate with local recruiters and schools in the area," said Maj. Kelly McNerney, Det. 1 director of operations. "Our team was bolstered by the support of the local recruiters and our own Aviation Inspiration Mentors (AIM) who volunteered to participate, making this week a phenomenal success in connecting with underrepresented groups."

The AIM program allows Det. 1 to connect young people with Air Force mentors from rated career fields that they could pursue. For this event, Capt. Wesley Cobb, a C-40 B/C pilot from the 1st Airlift Squadron at Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, was selected to participate with a Det. 1 team and tell his own story to students who might not have considered an aviation career.

"It's important to continue this method of outreach," Cobb said. "In a city like Houston, there are so many talented and hardworking individuals who don't know all of the opportunities that are out there."

Cobb graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy, Colorado, in 2014, and initially was assigned as a C-17 Globemaster III pilot. He currently transports senior civilian and military leaders of the military to destinations throughout the world.

"I was one of those students who weren't aware of all these opportunities," Cobb said. "If it hadn't been for my parents and a few instrumental mentors I would have never been able to accept a football scholarship and apply for the Air Force Academy."

On the first day of the Blitz, the team hit the ground running, visiting three

Houston area schools and meeting the local recruiters who would be paving the way to a successful rest of the week.

"We knew when we developed this vision, that we would need the expertise of the recruiters local to this area, who know how to best connect with the community," said Master Sgt. Cherelle Terry, a Det. 1 member and event lead for the Houston Blitz. "This has been a really rewarding experience to talk with these future Airmen about opportunities, careers and the future of their education, things that they maybe hadn't thought about yet."

For Terry, her new position at Det. 1 was an adjustment from her usual "field recruiter" role. Her time spent recruiting opened the doors to a successful Blitz engaging almost 2,200 students over the course of the week.

"We're liaisons for those young future aviators to connect with AIM mentors and get started on their pathway to wings. After spending so much time in a traditional recruiter position, I had to transition from recruiting students to informing, influencing and inspiring these young aspiring aviators," Terry said.

To cover more areas, Det. 1 was divided into teams designated for specific audiences with tailored information and opportunities for those students. This also allowed the leadership team to fully immerse themselves into the campuses where Det. 1 was hosting their General Officer Inspire presentations. GO Inspire is an Air Force-wide program that encourages general officers to engage schools and provide a real-life example for young people.

"The goal of GO Inspire intentionally aims to engage with a minority-serving institution which allows us to also connect with underrepresented groups," Terry said. "Each time we connect with one of the 774 minority-serving institutions, we're also informing, influencing and inspiring students to rise above the unknown and join an aviation career field."

The second day of the Blitz was packed with seven speaking engagements. Events were in-person or



SEAN COWHER

Brig. Gen. Matthew Barker (right), Texas Air National Guard chief of staff, speaks with students at the University of Houston about opportunities within the Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard in Houston Feb. 23.

virtual for the teams. There was a GO Inspire event featuring Brig. Gen. Matthew Barker, the Chief of Staff of the Air National Guard at the University of Houston, a minority-serving institution, for members of an organization known as L.E.G.A.C.I. which stands for leadership, excellence, grades, access, collaboration and identity.

"With the lack of military exposure in a lot of non-military cities, people think you join the service as a last resort, which isn't true. It can be a good 'plan A' as well," Cobb said.

After a short break for dinner, the team moved right into their virtual event for the night, the first presentation for Det. 1 of their newly rebranded, Rise Above Aviation Mentorship webinar.

"Previously this virtual webinar was titled Pathway to Wings, however, we decided it was time to capitalize on the best part of the presentations," said Maj. Matthew Roland, Det. 1 Director of Inspire Operations. "The mentorship after the presentation has always been the most robust discussion."

Roland said that RAAM lets attendees of all ages ask questions ranging from how to apply to the Air Force Academy to how current enlisted members can commission to become an aviator.

RAAM presentations allow youth

from all across the U.S. to join in, listen and discuss the potential options the Air Force can offer to people of all backgrounds, races, ethnicities and genders. Virtual presentations were created due to the limitations in travel during the COVID-19 pandemic, but the team continues to see many interested youth, young adults and influencers sign up for every presentation.

"As the global environment continues to change, connecting with youth becomes more and more important," said Lt. Col. Jay Park, Det. 1 commander. "The diversity of thought, backgrounds and beliefs are critical to the Air Force's mission success in the most interconnected and technologically advanced environment we've ever experienced. Therefore, it's vital for us to improve diversity in order to make us a stronger and more lethal force."

Det. 1 and its volunteers are seeing success.

"Whether it's high fives at a high school or proofreading a U.S. Air Force ROTC scholarship application, Det. 1 continues to make great strides in mentoring youth in the endless possibilities they could find within the Air Force," Park said.

For more information visit www.airforce.com/rise-above.